

North American Technician Excellence, Inc. (NATE)

DANTES Test Centers' Authorization

North American Technician Excellence, Inc. (NATE) authorizes military installations with DANTES test centers to administer the NATE series of residential and light commercial tests for the HVACR industry:

- Installation (Core and Specialty);
- Service (Core and Specialty), and
- Recertification Specialty (Installation and Service) tests.
- All tests must be kept under lock and key by the proctor until the time of administration, and
- Completed tests must be returned by *trackable* means within 24 hours of completion.

Background

North American Technician Excellence, Inc. (NATE) is a non-profit organization. The entire industry stands behind NATE, and was instrumental in creating the NATE Air Conditioning Excellence test. The unified NATE ACE test is the result of input from: ACCA (Air Conditioning Contractors of America), RSES (Refrigeration Service Engineers Society), and PHCC (Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors—National Association). 87% of consumers say it is important to have a certified technician work on their home comfort system.

NATE's supporters include Air Conditioning Contractors of America (ACCA); Air-Conditioning & Refrigeration Institute (ARI); American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, Inc. (ASHRAE); Building Performance Institute (BPI); Edison Electric Institute (EEI); Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI); Gas Appliance Manufacturers Association (GAMA); Heating, Air-Conditioning & Refrigeration Distributors International (HARDI); National Energy Management Institute (NEMI); Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors—National Association (PHCC—NA); Refrigeration Service Engineers Society (RSES); Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors Association (SMACNA); Sheet Metal Workers International Association (SMWIA); U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). NATE is the only nationally recognized HVACR test supported by the entire industry including the Environmental Protection Agency and endorsed by the Department Of Energy. NATE tests are approved for reimbursement under the Montgomery GI Bill.

**Standard of
Service**

NATE'S MISSION and ORGANIZATION—NATE is organized to develop and promote excellence in the installation and service of plumbing, heating, ventilation, air-conditioning and refrigeration equipment through a national testing and certification program called North American Technician Excellence (NATE).

NATE's mission is to provide for the professional development and promotion of excellence among heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, and refrigeration technicians installing or servicing residential and light commercial equipment.

NATE's slogan is: *"To develop and promote a higher standard of technician excellence."*

NATE is an independent organization that employs a consensus-derived test to verify that a technician has the knowledge and skills to install or service most of the HVACR equipment he encounters on a regular basis.

The NATE test is built upon consensus from all facets of the industry as to the tasks and skills which are required of an HVACR technician. NATE tests reflect what 80% of technicians need to know 80% of the time.

Test Description

Description To become NATE-certified a technician must pass a **CORE test** and a **SPECIALTY test** with a 70% score on each. All tests are multiple-choice (A-D) and all have an actual “best” answer with no questions having “All of the above” or “None of the above” as an answer. The technician can be certified as either an *installation* or a *service* technician. There are 50 questions on the CORE; 100 on each SPECIALTY test. The five SPECIALTY tests are for air conditioning, air distribution, heat pumps, gas heating, and oil heating. There are 13,000+ technicians nationwide and internationally.

All tests are proctored. Candidates have four hours to complete a NATE test session. Generally test sessions include a CORE and a SPECIALTY test.

There is no registration fee. Core tests cost \$65, and specialty ones, \$85. This is payable upon attending the testing session. Payment is given to the proctor and the proctor forwards the funds to NATE with the tests. Tests which arrive without accompanying payment will not be graded.

The NATE tests assess a technician’s applied knowledge as either an installer or a service technician. Tests cover several different areas:

- Air conditioning
- Air Distribution
- Gas Heating
- Heat Pump
- Oil Heating

A non-profit organization, NATE’s test encompasses these Core Values:

- Focus
- Job Relevancy
- Inclusiveness
- Independence
- Integrity

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Test Description, Continued

NATE Test Facts

Important facts about the NATE certification examination are:

No.	Important NATE Test Facts
1	The NATE Technical Committee is comprised of Subject Matter Experts (SME's) drawn from the entire HVACR industry who created this exam to reflect nationally what 80% of technicians need to know 80% of the time. The Technical Committee has 120+ members and meets twice a year to review and update the test.
2	The questions are written by a selected group of SME's nationwide to avoid a regional language bias. Statistical analysis of questions is constantly underway to flag deviations from the norm.
3	SME's receive detailed instructions for constructing questions so they reflect applied knowledge and actual field conditions a technician may encounter.
4	SME's, psychometricians, and editors review and revise all questions to ensure accuracy, relevancy, and conformity with psychometric principles.
5	Technical Committee members review questions at every meeting.
6	Each NATE test is revised and updated to reflect the latest developments in the field.
7	Tests are living documents which reflect the marketplace and skills and tasks in which today's technician is expected to be proficient.
8	The NATE CORE test covers Fundamentals of Heat Transfer; Fundamentals of Electricity; Communication Skills; Mathematics (including simple equations such as when A and C are known in $A \times B = C$, what is "B"?); and a few Customer Service questions
9	The test is national in scope and free from regional bias or jargon.
10	SME's and psychometricians review questions to assure they conform to psychometric principles and reflect the workplace and job practices. The entire test is reviewed every 5-7 years.
11	The Core test consists of 50 questions, the Specialty test, 100 questions. These are all multiple choice with an actual answer (none of which will be "All of the above" or "None of the above.")
12	The test conforms to the ADA and bilingual technicians can have a non-technical reader "read" the exam to them.
13	Questions represent a range of situations that technicians in a variety of work situations might encounter.
14	Payment is to be returned with the sealed tests, and tests returned without payment will not be graded.

Program Materials and Assistance

Program Materials The applicant, Training NCO, Training Officer, or the Testing Organization (DANTES) may download registration materials, Testing Organization, Proctor, and Exam Order and Test Scheduling Forms online at NATE through the VA chevron (www.natex.org) or write for information including a brochure about the program from:

North American Technician Excellence Inc.
4100 N. Fairfax, Suite 210
Arlington, VA 22203

Phone: (703) 600-0359
Toll Free: (877) 420-NATE
Fax: (703) 527-2316
Email: csmith@natex.org
Web: www.natex.org

The web contains information which is valuable in preparing for the examination and understanding the certification criteria.

Questions Call or write to NATE (877-420-NATE) regarding questions concerning:

- Applicant qualifications
- Test Fees
- Education and/or experience requirements,
- Recertification requirements or
- Any matter directly related to the NATE program.

How to Register to take the NATE Test

To Register to take the NATE Test

To register for the NATE examination at an authorized DANTES test center:

Step	Action
1	The Testing Organization will send completed application forms telling how many tests are needed and on what dates so they arrive at the NATE office 21 days prior to desired test session (including special services form) to: North American Technician Excellence ATTN: Carl Smith 4100 N. Fairfax, Suite 210 Arlington, VA 22203
2	Send TO and Proctor ID first to become listed as a Testing Organization. These forms are online at www.natex.org .
3	Send Exam Order and Test Scheduling Form after a Testing Organization ID Number has been issued and a Proctor ID Number has been chosen (can be Military ID Number or SSAN) so they arrive at least 21 days prior to the test date .
4	Include an address for FED EX or UPS delivery in the United States. Overseas sites should send an APO/FPO address and a point-of-contact phone and address (if different).

To Register to Take the NATE Test

To register for the NATE test at an authorized DANTES test center:

Step	Action
1	Make certain the DANTES office on base has filed a TO Application and Proctor Application with NATE. Give the completed test registration form to the Training Officer or NCO to forward to DANTES.
2	DANTES will see that the NATE Exam Order and Test Scheduling Form is completed and forwarded to NATE so that it arrives 21 days before the scheduled test date. Send questions to: NATE 4100 N. Fairfax, Suite 210 Arlington, VA 22203 Phone: (703) 600 0359 Toll Free: (877) 420-NATE

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How to Register to take the NATE Test, Continued

TCOs must include the DANTES ID number in a letter on official stationery indicating their agreement to administer either exam.

Deadline **Strictly adhere to deadline dates for submission of application forms.**
Dates **Refer to the current DANTES Calendar of National Certification Tests.**

Certification and Recertification Criteria

Certification Criteria for NATE Although anyone can take a NATE test, generally applicants should meet the following eligibility criteria to sit for the NATE certification or recertification tests:

No.	Criteria For NATE Certification and Recertification Tests
1	Be an HVACR technician. One year's experience is suggested before taking an INSTALLATION test; two, for SERVICE.
2	Want to take a test for air conditioning, air distribution, gas heating, heat pump or oil heating.
3	Review the KATEs, at www.natex.org , Click on Technician, click on 'KATES to Study', and download relevant KATE outlines.
4	NATE Test is for residential and light commercial, defined as 25-35 tons for A/C, and 400,000 BTU for heating.
5	To become NATE certified, a technician must pass a CORE test <u>and</u> a SPECIALTY test in INSTALLATION or SERVICE areas.
6	Must score 70% or better on both CORE and SPECIALTY tests.
7	Complete registration form so TO knows which tests to order. Submit payment at testing session.
8	Recertification is by continuing education (60 hours of verifiable NATE-Recognized Training over 5 year eligibility period); or 30+ hours of Verifiable NATE-Recognized training during 5 year eligibility period to take a "short recertification test; or simply retake the current SPECIALTY test for recertification.
9	To recertify, only SPECIALTY tests, <u>not</u> CORE tests are retaken.

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Certification and Recertification Criteria, Continued

Certification Criteria for NATE

Applicants should meet the following criteria to sit for the NATE examination:

No.	Eligibility For Certification or Recertification Criteria
1	Certification—Should have HVACR experience.
2	Must complete both a CORE and SPECIALTY test in either INSTALLATION or SERVICE.
3	Recertification—Must have completed both a CORE and a SPECIALTY test to currently hold NATE certification.
4	Provide verifiable documentation of 60 hours of NATE Recognized Training during the current 5-year period of NATE Certification eligibility (as shown on NATE Wallet Card). If Training is not NATE-Recognized, it cannot be counted
5	Must provide verifiable documentation of attendance at NATE-Recognized Training. Trainer must supply original attendance form or copy bearing Notary Seal.
6	Certification remains valid for five years after date of issue.

Eligibility Determination

Upon receipt of the registration, TO, Proctor and Exam Order/Test Scheduling Forms, tests will be sent. Payment must be returned with the completed tests. Both the candidate and proctor must affix the seal and sign it prior to return.

Certification and Recertification Fees

Certification Fees

Fees for examinations administered at DANTES test centers, as indicated below, shall be paid to NATE. The fee must accompany the completed test before it is returned from DANTES test centers.

Examination	Area	Fee*
NATE Certification <i>or</i> Recertification Tests	NATE Core	\$65
	NATE Specialty	\$85
	NATE Recertification Specialty	\$85
	NATE Short Test (must be accompanied by verification of 30+ hours of NATE Recognized Continuing Education over 5 years)	\$65
NATE Continuing Education Recertification	Submit Copies and Documentation of 60+ hours of NATE Recognized Training during the 5-year eligibility window	\$55

*Make checks or money orders payable to NATE/VGI Testing.

Administration

DANTES Test Center Administration

NATE authorizes DANTES TCOs on military installations to administer the examinations on demand, providing:

- TO has sent order for tests to arrive (at NATE address) at least 21 days prior to test's date
- DANTES Proctor has a NATE Proctor ID and NATE TO ID Number.
- Completed tests must be returned within 24 hours of the test's completion
- All Tests are kept secure under lock and key by the proctor.

(See DANTES National Calendar of Certification Tests for exact dates of already scheduled tests.)

The TCO may select a date for administration of the examination on any date within two days of the scheduled dates.

Military Administration

ADMINISTER THE NATE EXAMINATIONS TO ELIGIBLE ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY AND RESERVE COMPONENT PERSONNEL ON AN UNFUNDED (EXAMINEE PAYS) BASIS UNLESS EXISTENT MILITARY REGULATIONS PROVIDE OTHERWISE.

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Administration, Continued

Civilian Administration	<p>DANTES test centers may administer the NATE examinations to the following civilians on AN UNFUNDED (EXAMINEE PAYS) AND SPACE-AVAILABLE BASIS according to local command policy and Service regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retired military personnel• Military family members,• Veterans, and• U.S. federal employees
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Scoring

Scoring	Forward completed examinations to:
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VGI/ NATE Testing
1156 107th Street,
Arlington, TX 76011

Notification of Results	Examinees will be notified of test results and if passing, certification approximately 5-6 weeks after the test administration.
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Return of Unused Tests

Returns	Candidates who do not show up for a testing session and whose tests are unopened and unused should be identified by the proctor. The proctor returns unused tests and both the tests which were taken and the payment for them at the same time. As candidates do not pay for the test until they take it, there is no charge if they fail to attend a scheduled testing session.
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Postponing Test Date	Proctors may postpone or reschedule a test by notifying NATE (877-420-NATE or emailing csmith@natex.org) of the delay. If the reschedule is within a week of the original test date, the proctor may retain the tests. If the test date is more than two weeks away, the tests should be returned. If the TO has questions, they should contact NATE immediately.
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Retesting

Retesting

Applicants failing a NATE test may:

- Retake the examination after 30 days by registering and rescheduling for the test
 - Pay the cost shown above of the new test
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Problems

Problems

Contact NATE immediately if you experience any problems involving:

- Registration forms
 - Proctor or Testing Organization information
 - Tests
 - Scores, and or
 - Certificates, wallet cards, or chevrons not being received in a timely manner.
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Security

Test Loss or Compromise

Refer to Part I of the *DANTES Examination Program Handbook (DEPH)* for complete instructions if there is an NATE test loss or compromise of the test security as described in the TO and Proctor Guidelines. Lost or misplaced tests can affect the ability of that site to administer the NATE test and the site will be charged for those tests, and such loss or compromise may invalidate NATE testing at that site in the future as well as invalidating test results of any tests from that facility.

Contact DANTES immediately and refer to specific Service regulations for complete procedures. DANTES address is:

DANTES	Phone: (850) 452-1360
Code 20F	DSN: 922-1360
6490 Saufley Field Road	Fax: (850) 452-1161
Pensacola, FL 32509-5243	

Web Pages

DANTES Web Address Access the DANTES web pages at <http://www.dantes.doded.mil>.

NATE Web Address and Email Address Access the NATE web page at www.natex.org.
Specific questions to csmith@natex.org

DANTES E-Mail Address The DANTES Certification Program E-mail address is
certprog@voled.doded.mil.
